Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Education and Psychology

Doctoral School of Educational Science

Doctoral Programme in Researches of Education

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Éva Szabolcs PhD university professor

Lifestyle, family characteristics and their relationships of students educated according to educational sport school and not sport school curriculum

Júlia Patakiné Bősze

THESES OF DOCTORAL (PhD) DISSERTATION

Mentor: Dr. János Gombocz, professor emeritus, (Semmelweis Uni. of PE and Sport Sciences)

2014

INTRODUCTION

The national morbidity and mortality statistics related to the health status of the population show a distressing picture. People have tried to reveal the causes and point out the possible ways of change. Despite the different point of studies there is a consensus that the way of life, conduct of life and health behaviours - that are formed from a young age - plays a significant role in the development of unfavourable trends.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

- assessment and analysis of lifestyle characteristics of grade 7., 8. and 11., 12. students studying according to public sport school curriculum;
- assessment and analysis of the students in parallel classes studying according to different than sport school curriculum;
- survey and analysis the characteristics of lifestyle of youth from Jászság;
- comparison of the lifestyle characteristics among the above mentioned target groups;
- better understanding of the areas of certain lifestyle elements along family characteristics (such as age, education level, habits of the parents, family atmosphere, family structure) and exploration of relationships between lifestyle and family parameters (especially in the area of leisure and exercise, but in the same time observing other lifestyle elements) of the above mentioned samples;
- to show that the objectives of public education sport school curriculum really encourages the development of an appropriate level of health consciousness, stimulates to the consolidation of positive lifestyle components, achieving better results than the average, not “sport class” students of that age;
- to determine which areas of healthy lifestyles where the school can help and correct the most in order to develop a health conscious approach and practice. These shortcoming areas should be developed as the interpretation of the results of the research;
- to submit professional recommendations based on the results of the scientific results.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIAS

The subjects of lifestyle and health behaviour are not only considered to meet physical needs. Mentioning the way of life, especially meaning good lifestyle, the topic of health[1] is inevitable. There is a great emphasis on this global and complex approach in my thesis.

Collecting and analysing previous surveys and documentations I observed that many authors dealt with regional lifestyle of different age groups, but the children and adolescents could be grouped and compared according to many other parameters besides their age or their place of living – it was attempted to achieve this in my dissertation.

In connection with my education so far it occurred to me, that those children and adolescents who are more engaged in sports (also) at school level can be considered basically healthier or not, and how their lifestyle elements differs those who do not deal so much time focusing on sports areas. In addition, another basic question formulated in my mind that are those families with children or adolescent engaged priority in sports different in any ways from those families that are not or only marginally engaged with sport areas.

By surveying the literature reviews of public sport schools, the researchers are mostly analysed the elements of current technical conditions and contents or the athlete's physical and mental capabilities at sport schools. In spite of the many sports school studies and publications I have found areas (researching the lifestyle of students studying according to sports school curriculum, mapping of the family background), which has not previously been researched, so it was worth to begin a national survey that provides lacking results.

HYPOTHESIS

Comparing literature reviews, data and results as well as comparing surveyed children and their families within “shortage areas” occurred; the following hypotheses were phrased consisting of child and family lifestyle variables. The case of those areas that has not been previously measured I have created an own hypothesis by my own train of thought, and in some cases that stated evidence I tried to prove them with my own data.

[1] "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The correct bibliographic citation for the definition is:
Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948. The Definition has not been amended since 1948." http://www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html Letöltve: 2007.03.12.

I. The lifestyle characteristics of the sampled pupils from “sport classes” of sport schools show significant difference from the surveyed students of a „non-sport classes” from a sport school and students from Jászság.

I.1 At free time-related indicators, I assume that the members of “sport classes” at sport schools from both school degrees spend more time playing sports;

I.2 this way they have significantly less time remaining for other time-bound activities (H-H I.1.2.1 I.1.2.5) than the other two samples.

I.3 In case of health-related indicators, I assume that the survey results of “sport classes” from sport schools will reflect significantly more health-conscious responses than the other two samples from both school levels (H 1.3.1 - Mon I.3.9)

II. The educational level of the parents significantly affects certain factors of lifestyles (leisure related, sport related, non-specific symptoms related) (II.1 H - H II.7).

III. The family atmosphere for children correlates with certain lifestyle elements (H III.1 - H III.7).

IV. The family atmosphere is closely related to the parents’ education. I assume that among the children with higher educated mothers and fathers achieve significantly higher complex family atmosphere indicator than the children of lower educated parents.

V. Many different parameters show significant difference between the families of children from “sport classes” of sport schools compared to families of children from “non-sport classes” of sport schools as well as families from the Jászság (V.1 H - H V.5).

VI. Parents sport-past influence the regular sports activities of their children. I assume that the children of those parents who (sometime ever) have been athletes spend more time doing sports outside the school, and often participate in after-school sports sessions than the children of the parents have never been an athlete.

VII. The estimated body mass indexes of the parents affect the estimated body mass index of their children. I assume that the children of parents with higher BMI values have higher BMI values compared to children of parents with lower BMI values.

VIII. Smoking habits of parents influence their children smoking frequency habits at secondary school age. I assume that there are significantly higher portion of children smoking among those children who have smoker mothers and fathers, compare children with non-smoker parents.

IX. The indicator of the importance of sport mediated by the parents is related to the importance of the chosen sport of their children. I assume that the children of parents marked higher points to “priority of sports” will mark higher points to the „priority of sport” significantly than those children whose parents indicated lower points for “priority of sport”.

X. The form of cohabitation of the family influences the family atmosphere experienced by a child. I assume that the value of the complex family index will be higher at those cases when the biological parents are together comparing with families when biological parents are not together.

XI. The cohabitation form of the family influences the frequency of the non specific symptoms experienced by the child. I assume that the frequency of the calculated non-specific symptoms will be lower at those families with biological parents together in comparison with those families without both biological parents live together.

METHODS

Population and sample

The samples in my dissertation are from the two different times. 40% of the pupils from primary schools and secondary schools were taken into the research in 18 township of Jászság which was recorded in 2005[2]. There were 693 7th and 8th grade elementary school children and their parents, and 389 high school students their parents included in my sample from the Jászság.

Another survey sample of my dissertation was implemented at spring semester of 2012-2013 school year. The selection of the surveyed population was carried out in public education sport schools (thesis. Annex 3).

The results of my dissertation represent 18 schools from sport school programs, that covers some part of Hungary (Appendix No. 2 and 5. of the dissertation), although these are not representative neither geographically nor age ratio wise. The number of 7th and 8th graders reaches the total of 1,500 pupils nationwide in the supported 54 schools and from the 11th and 12th grade nearly 1,100 students studying according to the sport school curriculum at the time of the survey was carried out. I have measured and surveyed 499 pupils from the 7th and 8th grade and 103 students from the 11th and 12th grade in 18 sport schools. The conclusion from the results cannot be generalized to the national sports school system as a whole. In the view of the above mentioned, the information has been extracted from the research only can considered exploratory.

I have surveyed the 7th and 8th grade and/or the 11th and 12th grade students and their parents from "sport classes" and also their parallel classes. The latter were not studying according to public sport school curriculum.

[2] Only those children were taken into the survey whose parents have signed a statement that agreed on the participation.

Collection devices and methods

The subjects of lifestyle and health behaviour are not only considered to meet physical needs. The Complex Family Questionnaire (CFQ) helped me to become aware of the family atmospheres and acceptance (Rathunde 1996; Csíkszentmihályi et al 1993).

The socio-economic characteristics of a family were collected by questionnaire as well as the eating, leisure, recreation and physical activity habits of the children.

Mathematical – statistical methods

As the fundamental classification I have regarded the school classes (as 7^{th} and 8^{th} grade - 11^{th} and 12^{th} grade) and also the curriculum if the certain student studied according to the sport school concept or not. Further breakdown or possible merging of groups of children depends on the objectives.

Before applying comparative statistical analysis I have carried out a normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) and where I did not get normal distribution results, there I used nonparametric tests.

Data presentation and analysis were presented by descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage, minimum, maximum) and with the use of multivariate techniques (Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney test, Spearman's correlation, chi-square test). The correlations, derived distributions and testing hierarchical relationships were executed by the use of multivariate statistics.

Calculations were carried out with using SPSS 17.0 and GraphPad Prism 5.0 programs.

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS – RESPONDS AND RECOMMMENDATIONS OF THE THESIS

I was examining the family influence of the children' and adolescents' lifestyle development in my work. The main aim of my thesis was to present the lifestyle and the family characteristics of those seventh, eighth, eleventh and twelfth grade students and their parents who are educated according to the educational sport school curriculum. They were also compared to other students who are taught by different curriculum.

In connection with the above mentioned objective groups of children and adolescent who are educated according to the educational sport school curriculum from eighteen different primary or secondary schools, students from the same schools who are educated not according to the sport school curriculum and pupils and parents from eighteen Jászság I have reached with my questionnaire survey and research.

I have to emphasize on the limit of the research that students from only 18 sport schools out of 50 were included in the research and they were volunteering to answer questions. So the conclusions only apply to respondents, not to the entire 7-8th grade and 11-12th grade from all public education type of sports schools.

Hypotheses and questions, and also the answers are complex of the thesis. The results could be divided up into three important areas. **One of the main topics** is to survey the lifestyle of the pupils educated according to the sport school curriculum compare to students taught by different curriculum.

The starting point of my assumptions was to prove or disprove the idea of the sport-school curriculum developers. According to the fundamental documents of the sport school educational system the new type of sport school system was established due to a dual-purpose of which one is to develop *health-conscious behaviour* and lifestyle in the future generations. I assumed that if there is so much emphasis on this topic in the target system, the students educated by sports school curriculum became more health-conscious compared to students studied according to different curriculum.

My results do not clearly show that the students educated by sport school curriculum are leading a healthier way of life, or overall they would be more health-conscious than the students educated by different curriculum. I have found statistically unconfirmed trends at some of the health indicators, but at the multiple-studied areas I only found major difference at two cases (areas) compared to other groups at secondary school level, one of which was the

frequency of dieting. At both school levels, however, at the self classification of the health the students from “sport classes” are considered themselves significantly healthier compared to students from educated by different curriculum. I think this is largely attributable to the matter of awareness, that they likely to consider themselves as healthier because of the sport and their surrounding environment.

On the issue of health awareness, knowledge, skills and proficiency system are very important for all children and adolescents. My questions are mostly aimed at forms of behaviours that are manifested in actions on a skill level. In these questions, the answers of “sport class” students were very similar to the answers of the students from sports schools, but not from “sport classes”. On the basis of the results, I think although the sport school curriculum includes more health promotion topics, yet the previously worded thoughts of *Bábosik* prevailed (*Bábosik* and *Mezei*, 1994. p.86-89.); so that in addition to other areas the school’s atmosphere and tradition is decisive at health education. At those schools where there are classes educated by sport school curriculum, the complete school management stands to achieve a healthy lifestyle and this approach is not only reflected to the “sport classes” but also to everyone else like those students who are not studying according to the sport school curriculum. The similarity of the healthy lifestyle habits between the students from “sport classes” and students from their parallel classes could be explained by the theory of informal learning as well. So thus (although the “official” curriculum is not the same), the processing, refusal or the incorporation of the school’ standards into the personality can bring similar results at the issue of health consciousness.

I have studied the *time parameter* and its components of the lifestyle of the children and adolescents. My assumption is clearly proven that those students who are taught by the educational sport school curriculum spend significantly more time on extracurricular sports activities on a weekly basis compared to the other two groups. The differences were even more significant at secondary school level than at primary school level.

Based on this time difference I have investigated whether the “sport class” students expand less time to other time-bound activity or not. As a result, I can say that at both educational level the students educated by sport school curriculum spent significantly less time for daily reading compared to other test group, while at secondary school level the “learning time” and “after school activities ” also were significantly less for “sport class” students.

The **second major topic** of my dissertation is a comparison of the parents whose child educated by educational sport school curriculum to those parents whose child is not educated according to the sport school curriculum. From my multi-directional presumptions I have received two significant differences in this hypothesis group. My results show that the presumption was true as more mothers and fathers of “sport class” pupils are/were playing sports compared to the parents from other groups I have studied. In addition, the parents of “sport class” students judged significantly "more positive" the “sport importance” question that means they considered sport as a part of their children’s life as more important as “non-sport class” parents.

The third major topic of my dissertation is to survey several family-related indicators. According to several authors the family can significantly influence the lifestyle of the children and the adolescents. It can be considered as “direct effect” when any of the *parents’ lifestyle element* correlate with the lifestyle element of the student. It can be stated, that according to the correlation values of the test samples, among the mother’s sport lifestyle in the past and the child’s frequency of doing sport there are secure, but weak positive relation. In case of the fathers there is no such relation could be manifested.

Based on the correlation values it can be stated about the sample that there are positive, but weak positive relation between the mothers’ BMI value and their children’ BMI value. There is also no relation at BMI values of the fathers’.

As the matter of smoking I have found that according to the tests the children of the non-smoking fathers and mothers reported significantly less smoking frequency than the children of the smoker (or quitter from smoking) fathers and mothers.

It belongs to the parents’ lifestyle attitude that how important it is for them, that their children do sport with some regularity. In this question is can be found that there are statistical relationship among the sport-importance -indicator transmitted by the parent to the children and the sport-importance-indicator chosen by the student.

The *parents’ level of education*-related and the related investigations started out from the assumption that higher educated parents may be more aware of how they raise their children; and this result could be seen in the health consciousness, and time organization of the students. The result of the second hypotheses-group is evidenced at only few points. The results of the correlation calculation showed that children of higher educated parents spend significantly less time with watching television or movies.

The question of the family-atmosphere was novelty in the thesis. I found correlation at some point among the lifestyle of the students and the more complex family atmosphere. Based on correlation analysis among the attitude to the sport of the children and adolescent, and the score of the family atmosphere provided by them there are positive, but weak positive relation. So, in case of the higher complex family value I measured more positive attitude to sport.

This complex family atmosphere affects several things supposedly. Based on my research it is sure that children of parents with higher education live in more complex family atmosphere.

According to my research some parts of the children do *not live together* with their biological parents. There are high number of people who raise their child alone or searching for a new form of relationship. Approximately 33% of the examined sport-school primary school students live together with only one of the biological parent. In case of the high school students it is 30.4%. In my opinion this also affects the lifestyle of the children. The results show that this kind of family living does not show difference in terms of how the children think about their family (complex or simple).

From another point of view I have found that those kind of students whose biological parents live together show significantly less problematical symptoms (like headache, stomach-ache, tiredness, nervousness) as those children whose biological parents do not live together.

As final thoughts it can be stated that we are together responsible for the development of the students' lifestyle. Besides the factors analyzed above -in further studies- there are many influencing factors has to and may take into consideration from the urban development concept to the growing range of the media channels.

LIST OF REFERENCES IN THE THESIS

Bábosik István és Mezei Gyula (1994): *Neveléstan*. Telosz Kiadó, Budapest

Csikszentmihályi, M., Rathunde, K. és Whalen, S. (1993): *Talented teenagers: The roots of success and failure.* New York, Cambridge University Press

Rathunde, K. (1996): Family context and talented adolescents' optimal experience in school – related activities. *Journal of Research of Adolescence*, 6. 605-628.